

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 21-29 are pending. Claims 21 and 29 have been amended. Therefore, upon entry of this amendment, which is respectfully requested, claims 21-29 will remain pending.

Claims 21-23 and 25-29 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,208,976 to Bess *et al.* ("Bess") in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,466,117 to Resler *et al.* ("Resler").

Claim 24 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Bess in view of Resler as applied to claim 21, and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 3,975,261 to Beck.

Although Applicant disagrees with the Examiner's allegations, Applicant has amended the claims in order to expedite prosecution of the claims and issuance of a patent. In particular, Applicant respectfully asserts that Bess and Resler, taken alone or together, fail to teach or suggest "wherein the conveyor system is controlled according to state variables associated with receiving a printed circuit board from an upstream device and providing an assembled printed circuit board assembly to a downstream device, and wherein the state variables include one or more of a first variable indicating that the upstream device is ready to deliver the printed circuit board, a second variable indicating that the downstream device is ready to receive the assembled printed circuit board assembly, a third variable indicating that the conveyor system is ready to receive the printed circuit board, and a fourth variable indicating that the conveyor system is ready to deliver the assembled printed circuit board assembly" as recited in amended independent claim 21. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of this rejection to claim 21 and all claims depending therefrom.

Applicant also respectfully asserts that claim 24 is allowable over Bess and Resler, based at least on the dependency of claim 24 from claim 21 for at least the reasons given above. Further, Beck fails to remedy the deficiencies of Bess and Resler as discussed above.

Nonetheless, Applicant reserves the right to file a continuation including claims as pending prior to this amendment, as well as arguments and reasons as to why those claims are believed to be patentably distinct from the cited references.

Appl. No. 10/770,913
Amdt. dated May 17, 2005
Reply to Office Action of November 17, 2004,

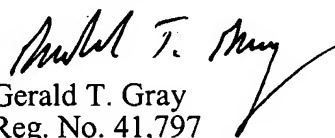
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CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, Applicants believe all claims now pending in this Application are in condition for allowance. The issuance of a formal Notice of Allowance at an early date is respectfully requested.

If the Examiner believes a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of this application, please telephone the undersigned at 925-472-5000.

Respectfully submitted,


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